

House Armed Services Committee

DEMOCRATS

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Ike Skelton, Ranking Member

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Dems Oppose Limitations on Women in the Military

Washington D.C.—Today the House Armed Services Committee considered an amendment to H.R.1815, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, that would limit the ability of women to serve in the military.

"We are a nation at war," declared **Ranking Member Ike Skelton (MO)**. "How can we risk driving qualified people away from military service because their career options are limited by a policy that has never been studied? Our committee owes it to our service men and women to conduct full oversight of this issue before taking action to change the status quo."

Rep. Vic Snyder (AR) said, "It is disappointing to this committee take action with such little preparation, hearings or deliberation. I am concerned that this provision will create confusion among our troops and deter women from joining the Armed Services in the future."

"This is an issue of national security. Our military is fighting two wars and the brave and capable women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan have performed admirably," said **Rep. Susan Davis (CA)**. "We can not risk sending them a message that their service is not valued."

"The Department of Defense opposes this provision, and I can see no reason to overrule the professional judgment of the military leadership when we haven't even had a hearing on this issue," said **Rep. Loretta Sanchez (CA)**. "This provision sends a horrible message to our soldiers -- both male and female -- and it is quite obviously going to affect recruiting, retention, and morale."

"This provision is a solution in search of a problem. The overwhelming feedback from our military servicemembers in Iraq and the military and civilian leadership in the Pentagon is that women are performing miraculously in a wide variety of critical jobs. The role of women in our military isn't controversial in the military and it has only very recently become controversial in this Committee. This provision sends the wrong message to these brave women and to young women who are considering service in our military," added **Rep. Robert Andrews (NJ)**.

Information is not considered final until committee passage of H.R.1815.

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